592 443 43 [455] in cash he receives all year and he has made elaborate plans for its disposal. He often watches the scale men for several weeks asking questions about them from other farmers, perhaps even going to visit a few to see if he can obtain a slightly better price than that set by the government. On their side the scale men may try to buy a "future" if they see the farmer is in trouble. This involves a cash advance and a much lower final sale price which is intended to cover the greater risk by the buyer since the crop may fail. This practice is illegal, and there have been very serious attempts to stamp it out.

592 443 445 Craft production and special services such as religious prayers or barbering are made available in several ways. If someone needs a new hoe, or a mat, or a calabash, or the services of a religious person, he may go to that person's household and ask for it. Even in large villages whose markets are open every day it is still common to go to the household of a producer and purchase things when they are required. On the other hand for many things it is still common to go to the market and see what is available.

443 [192] [103] Markets are held weekly and referred to by the day of the week they are held in any particular village. More often than not people use this weekday as another name for the village itself. Thus in Magumeri a man says, "I am going to Thursday this Monday," meaning that on Monday he is going to Ngubbura, the village that has its market on Thursdays. Even large villages whose market places are open every day are known to have one day a week that is their "real" market day. Thus the market in Maiduguri, the capital city, is much busier on Mondays, its named market day, than during the rest of the week. The reason for this is the link-up of market villages into interlocking cycles.

The best way to understand a market cycle is to ask a Kanuri, "What markets do you visit?" He then generally gives you a village for every day in the week [196] except for Friday, the Moslem sabbath. These are a series of villages of medium 443 size, usually within a radius of five to ten miles from the village in which you 484 asked the question. Not everyone goes to a market every day, but they know of one 438 in their vicinity and may go to as many as three or four a week if they are busy trading goods. Sometimes they may visit two villages on the same market day one in one direction this week, then another one in the other direction next week, but to a remarkable degree Bornu markets do have a weekly cycle in which people can visit a market close by on any day of the six working days of the week. The reason these weekly market cycles are interlocking stems from the fact that no two villages have exactly the same cycle. Thus a man in Magumeri might go to Ardoram eight miles north of Magumeri for his Monday market, but the Magumeri man goes to Ngubbura five miles to the south of his own village for the Thursday market. On the other hand on that same day the Ardoram man goes further north to a village in *his* cycle rarely ever visited by the Magumeri people, and he in his turn does not often attend the Ngubbura market which is thirteen miles south of Ardoram. So each village has some, but not all, markets in common with others close by, and the entire countryside is linked into interlocking sets of these weekly market cycles. It is important to remember here that many people walk to market, and it is more difficult for the Ardoram man to walk the twenty-six miles to and from Ngubbura market than it is to walk the much shorter distance to his own Thursday market.

452 not heal easily.

452 Money may also be obtained in small quantities from a local
426 money-lender, whose usual interest charge is twenty-five to fifty per cent over a short time span of one to six months. These loans may or may not include ran (collateral) in which the indebted individual puts up
452 a robe, a cow, a sheep, or some of his cash crop as collateral. This
426 latter method of putting up some of the cash crop has developed in the
455 last decade or so into a virtual selling of futures, rather than simple utilization of the crop as collateral. A man who needs money during the growing season can obtain cash for the promise of so much of his cash crop. Since the prices of the crop have been stabilized by the government, the money-lender is fairly certain of the margin of his return. During 1956-57, when groundnuts were bringing 55/- per bag, a man could get 20/- to 25/- per bag from a money-lender for his crops after the plants had germinated. Just how much of this goes on is difficult to say, for it is illegal, and is also carried on by cash crop buyers who have much larger cash reserves than local money-lenders. Again, it is customary, where possible, for a man who has sold a future, to try and save enough money from his non-farming occupation to buy someone else's future, so that at harvest time he can still obtain his yearly cash harvest. This obviously tends to spread the indebtedness, but to what extent is at present unknown.

426 If informants' reports are to be trusted, it would seem as if the actual amount of indebtedness at the local rural level at any one time in Bornu is very small, rising slightly during the growing season.(1)

(1) The writer's own rough calculation of rural indebtedness comes from a small sample of budgets. The only constant indebtedness which turned up was in the realm of operating expenses (see above p. 307); 18% of operating expenses among fifteen peasant male household heads was being carried on credit. This came to only 2% of the total annual expenditures for the budget sample.

442 369 camp stools, battery radios, talk of politics and city life enliven the rural scene.

442 443 452 Malam Mina buys for his mai gida, Alhaji Ali, a Kanuri trader in Maiduguri who has a retail store or "canteen" as it is called locally. The mai gida gives Malam Mina cigarettes, flashlight batteries, perfumes, etc., for the latter's teber (table) or booth which a younger [405] brother runs for him in Maiduguri. Alhaji Ali obtains about ten scales from a Levantine trader during the harvest season and gives them out to his tada (boys) who go to the bush and buy the cash crop. Malam Mina receives a straight commission of 12/- per ton of decorticated nuts and as much profit as he can on the import items (mostly textiles) which are also obtained on credit from his mai gida. He remarked how he had only been with Alhaji Ali this one year, last year having bought for another man who had a direct link to a European company. However, last year he found that his buying price was £2.0.0 less per ton than other [434] scale men, and his commission fell. In 1955 his commission (from receipt slips) was about £60.0.0 but he hoped to get around £75.0.0 or £80.0.0 in 1956-57.

442 435 Malam Mina may, if it is possible, depress the price below the buying price given to him. This causes no undue concern on the part [455] of his mai gida in the city as long as his tonnage does not decline. He also buys futures at 20/- to 25/- per bag, whenever he can, but would not estimate how much of this he does.

441 571 It is interesting to note that Malam Mina has been taken on by his new mai gida and given a trading role without the more usual period of general service and subordination, as in the case of the "boys" [212] of Alkali Bukar. Here we have another example of specialization. Malam Mina is an experienced scale man. He can read and record figures and sign his name.